VERTIGO

GREEN LANTERN
ONLY IN THEATRES JUNE 17

CINDERELLA

FABLES ARE FOREVER

5

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suggested for
mature readers
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CHRIS
ROBERSON

SHAWN
MCMANUS

Switzerland, 1986.
I'D DRAGGED SNOW WHITE, THE DEPUTY MAYOR OF FABLETOWN, HALFWAY AROUND THE WORLD TO USE AS *BAIT,* HOPING TO DRAW OUT DOROTHY GALE, THE WICKED BITCH OF THE EAST.
ONLY IT TURNED OUT THAT DOROTHY HAD SET A TRAP OF HER *OWN,* AND SPRUNG IT BEFORE I EVEN KNEW WHAT WAS HAPPENING.
NOW DOROTHY WAS TURNING HER CATCH OVER TO THE LEADERS OF THE SHADOW FABLETOWN, WHO NO DOUBT WOULD PAY **HANDSOMELY** FOR INTEL ON THEIR WESTERN COUNTERPARTS.
PROBLEM BEING, THAT INTEL WAS LOCKED IN THE HEAD OF SNOW WHITE, AND IF I DIDN'T GET HER BACK, BIGBY WOLF--MY ***BOSS***--WAS GOING TO ***KILL*** ME.

WHAT DO YOU MEAN, "WAIT"?
WAIT MEANS WAIT, GOSPOZHA DOROTHY. WE SHALL HAVE TO FIRST SEE WHAT SECRETS WE CAN WRING FROM SNOW WHITE, AND THEN WE WILL SETTLE THE FEE.
YOU CAN'T EXPECT US TO PAY UNTIL WE KNOW FOR CERTAIN THAT YOU HAVE DELIVERED.
I CAN EXPECT YOU TO PAY, AND DO.
PLEASE, PLEASE, THERE IS NO NEED FOR THIS UNPLEASANTNESS.
BESIDES, IT ISN'T AS IF I CARRY THOSE KINDS OF FUNDS WITH ME.
BE CAREFUL HOW FAR YOU PUSH ME, IVAN DURAK.
DON'T FORGET, I KNOW LOTS OF SECRETS ABOUT YOU FOLKS, TOO, AND MAYBE SOMEONE WOULD BE WILLING TO PAY FOR THAT.
SORRY ABOUT THIS, I TRULY AM.
I KNOW YOU JUST HAVE A JOB TO DO.
WHAT?!

BUT I HAVE A JOB TO DO, TOO.
AND RIGHT NOW, THAT JOB INCLUDES KICKING YOU IN THE *FACE.*
I'D TRACKED DOROTHY FROM THE LITTLE SKI RESORT TOWN WHERE SHE'D NABBED SNOW WHITE, BUT HADN'T BEEN ABLE TO GET CLOSE ENOUGH TO MAKE A MOVE BEFORE NOW.

CINDERELLA
FABLES ARE FOREVER
– PART FIVE –

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WHAT THE HECK?
THWONK
SORRY, DOROTHY.
BUT THIS BIRD IS GOING BACK TO THE OTHER SIDE OF THE RAINBOW.
WHOOMP WHOOMP WHOOMP
OH, NO YOU DON'T, CINDY! I TOOK SNOW WHITE FAIR AND SQUARE.
SHE'S MINE!

KRACK
KAPOW!
CINDY, IS THIS HOW YOU TREAT *EVERYONE* WHO COMES KNOCKING AT YOUR DOOR?
NOW, YOU CAN'T FLY WITH ME HOLDING YOUR ARM, AND YOU CAN'T SHAKE ME LOOSE WITHOUT CRASHING, AND I AM *NOT* LETTING GO.
SO HOW'S ABOUT WE LAND THIS BIRD AND *SETTLE* THINGS, WOMAN TO WOMAN?
IT WAS CLEAR THAT DOROTHY HADN'T GOTTEN A REPUTATION AS THE DEADLIEST KILLER IN A DOZEN WORLDS WITHOUT KNOWING HER BUSINESS.

IF SHE **IS** STILL ALIVE, I'M HOPING THAT SHE'S BEEN OUT OF THE GAME LONG ENOUGH TO GET RUSTY. BUT I'M NOT OPTIMISTIC.
The Deadly Desert of Oz, Now.
THE "SPOON BRIGADE"--THE LIVING SILVERWARE THAT'S FLYING THIS CRATE--IS DRIVING US TOWARD THE EMERALD CITY.
I KNEW THAT THIS WAS A TRAP WHEN I WALKED INTO IT, FIGURING THAT THE EASIEST WAY TO FIND DOROTHY WAS TO LET **HER** BRING **US** TO WHEREVER SHE WAS.
BUT SO FAR THERE'S BEEN NO SIGN OF HER.

ONLY **BUNGLE,** A CREEPY GLASS CAT WITH VISIBLE BRAINS.
THING ABOUT A TRANSPARENT SKULL, THOUGH, IS YOU CAN SEE BY THE WHIRLING GEMS WHEN HE'S **THINKING.**
OR, AS IS THE CASE RIGHT NOW, WHEN HE'S **DREAMING.**
IVAN, THE GLASS CAT IS **DOWN** FOR THE COUNT.
IF WE'RE GOING TO MAKE A MOVE, WE SHOULD MAKE IT **NOW.** BUT FIRST WE'LL NEED TO FIGURE HOW TO GET OUT OF...
NOT TO WORRY, CINDY.
A HUNDRED LIFETIMES OF GETTING MYSELF INTO AND OUT OF STICKY SITUATIONS HAS LEFT ME WITH A FEW **TRICKS** UP MY SLEEVES.

OKAY, GREAT. SO COME OVER AND GET ME OUT OF--
DAMN YOU, MONSTERS!
YOU SHOULD HAVE ***KILLED*** ME WHEN YOU HAD YOUR ***CHANCE!***
SNURK WHA--?
IVAN, YOU ***IDIOT!*** DON'T DO THIS ***ALONE!***
I GUESS IT'S NOT FOR NOTHING THAT "IVAN DURAK" MEANS "IVAN THE FOOL" IN RUSSIAN.
*STILL, FOR A FOOL HE **IS** PRETTY DAMNED **BRAVE.***
ATTACK!
ATTACK!
ATTACK!

STOP STRUGGLING! YOUR WORRIES WILL SOON BE OVER!
NO! I BEG YOU--
KRASH
NOOOO!
DON'T WORRY, THE FALL WON'T HURT YOU.
BUT STOPPING CERTAINLY WILL.
IVAN, BE CAREFUL!
DON'T WORRY, I'VE GOT THEM.
AIIEEEE!

OUCH. THOSE SPOONS MAY BE SMALL, BUT THEIR SWORDS ARE ***SHARP.***
WHAT THE HECK WERE YOU ***THINKING?***
ATTACKING THEM ON YOUR ***OWN*** LIKE THAT?
I SUPPOSE I ***WASN'T*** THINKING. I JUST SAW AN OPPORTUNITY, AND INSTINCT TOOK OVER.
THERE YOU ARE. AS A BRACELET, MIND YOU, I DON'T THINK THIS REALLY ***SUITS*** YOU.
SERIOUSLY, THOUGH, IVAN, I'M ***IMPRESSED.*** DIVING IN TO SAVE ME FROM THE CHISS. OFFERING YOURSELF IN MY PLACE. ATTACKING THE ENEMY ON YOUR OWN.
PERHAPS THEY ***SHOULD*** HAVE CALLED YOU "IVAN THE ***FOOLHARDY."***
FOOLHARDY ENOUGH TO THINK YOU MIGHT JOIN ME IN A ***TOAST,*** BEFORE WE CONTINUE ON TO OUR INEVITABLE CONFRONTATION WITH SILVERSLIPPER?
WE MUST REST ***SOMETIME,*** SO WE MIGHT AS WELL DO SO IN ***STYLE.***
*HE **DOES** HAVE A POINT.*
*I DON'T THINK I'VE HAD A SOLID NIGHT'S SLEEP IN **DAYS,** AND I'LL NEED TO BE AT MY BEST WHEN I FACE DOROTHY.*

LOOKS LIKE WE'VE GOT A **WAYS** TO GO BEFORE WE REACH THE EMERALD CITY, SO WE MIGHT AS **WELL.**
I'LL ADMIT IT, I ORIGINALLY THOUGHT IVAN WAS WORKING FOR DOROTHY, OR WORKING **WITH** HER AT LEAST.
BUT I GUESS EVEN **I** CAN BE WRONG SOMETIMES. I'M GLAD TO KNOW HE'S NOT PLAYING FOR THE OTHER TEAM, THOUGH.
HE'S KINDA **CUTE.**
I HOPE YOU KNOW WHAT YOU'RE **DOING,** MISTRESS...

Switzerland, 1986.
DOROTHY KNEW JUST WHAT SHE WAS DOING WHEN SHE GRABBED HOLD OF ME THROUGH THAT HELICOPTER WINDOW.
WITH SNOW WHITE ON BOARD, I COULDN'T RUN THE RISK OF CRASHING.
AND KNOWING THAT DOROTHY WOULD NEVER LET GO IF THERE WAS MONEY IN IT FOR HER, I HAD NO CHOICE BUT TO SET DOWN ON THE GROUND, TO SETTLE THINGS BY HAND.
THERE'S JUST ONE THING I'VE GOT TO KNOW, DOROTHY.
IS IT JUST THE MONEY, OR ARE YOU REALLY A STONE-COLD BITCH?
OH, LIKE YOU'RE ONE TO TALK, LITTLE MISS GLASS SLIPPERS.
YOU THINK I DON'T KNOW ALL THE DIRTY DEEDS YOU'VE GOT TO YOUR CREDIT?

YOU'RE THE SAME AS ME, CINDY. A ***KILLER***.
ONLY DIFFERENCE IS, I'M ***BETTER*** AT IT!
THUNK
UNF
I'VE KILLED, SURE. BUT ONLY WHEN I ***HAD*** TO, IN THE SERVICE OF MY ***COMMUNITY***.
IN THE SERVICE OF YOUR ***PAYCHECK***, YOU MEAN.
I'M A ***PATRIOT***, DOROTHY. I'D DO IT FOR ***FREE***.
FTHUD

YOU'RE *WRONG.*
YOU ARE *NOTHING* LIKE ME.
UCK M-MAYBE--
MAYBE YOU'RE *RIGHT.*
SMACK
IF YOU *WERE* ANYTHING LIKE ME, YOU'D HAVE BROKEN MY *NECK* WHEN YOU HAD THE CHANCE, AND--
CHOCK
IT WAS A LUCKY SHOT, I'LL ADMIT IT. AND A CHEAP SHOT, AT THAT.
AAAAHH! AAAAAHH!

I KICKED HER WHEN HER BACK WAS TURNED, AND SHE WENT **RIGHT** OVER THE FALLS.
WHEN SHE HIT THE GROUND, I KNEW SHE WASN'T GETTING **UP** AGAIN.
I WAS BACK AT THE HELICOPTER WHEN THE DRUGS WORE OFF AND SNOW CAME TO.
THE LAST THING SHE REMEMBERED WAS LEAVING THE DISCO THE NIGHT BEFORE.
SUMBUDDY MUSTA SLIPPED ME UH MICKEY.
COME ON, SNOW, LET'S GET YOU HOME.

The Deadly Desert of Oz, Now.
NO ONE CAN SET FOOT ON THE SANDS OF THE DEADLY DESERT AND LIVE, I'M TOLD.
MUST BE WHY SOMEONE IS BUILDING A HIGHWAY ACROSS IT.
GOT ANY MORE?
NOT IN THIS BOTTLE, I'M AFRAID.
I'LL BE BACK IN A HEARTBEAT.
YOU'D THINK THAT, FOR A GIRL WHO MARRIED HER PRINCE CHARMING, A GUY LIKE THIS WOULDN'T HOLD A LOT OF APPEAL.
BUT MAYBE THAT'S WHY I'VE ALWAYS HAD A WEAKNESS FOR GUYS WHO AREN'T TOO IMPRESSED WITH THEMSELVES.
WE COULD DRINK OURSELVES INSENSIBLE BEFORE THIS CRATE COULD RUN DRY!
WELL, WE WOULDN'T WANT THAT, NOW WOULD WE? I'LL NEED AT LEAST A FEW SENSES FOR WHAT I'VE GOT IN MIND.
OR MAYBE I JUST LIKE A GUY WITH BIG EARS WHO CAN MAKE ME LAUGH.

CALL IT A DRUNKEN INDISCRETION, CALL IT A MOMENT OF PASSION...
...CALL IT A ONE-NIGHT STAND IF YOU WANT. AND WHO HASN'T HAD ONE OF THOSE, NOW AND AGAIN?
MMMMM
I--I DON'T UNDERSTAND. I DIDN'T THINK YOU THOUGHT OF ME, WELL, LIKE THIS...
AND I THINK YOU SHOULD STOP THINKING.
MAYBE I JUST WANT TO FEEL ALIVE ONE MORE TIME BEFORE I FACE DOROTHY.
JUST IN CASE.

LATER--AND A SURPRISINGLY LATER *LATER* THAN I WOULD HAVE EXPECTED--IVAN AND I JUST LAY TOGETHER, ENJOYING THE AFTERGLOW.
WHEN I CAME TO FIND YOU IN NEW YORK, I SOMEHOW *KNEW* WE WOULD END UP LIKE THIS.
I KNEW YOU WOULD END UP HERE, IN MY ARMS, SOONER OR LATER.
HMMM?
I KNOW HOW YOU *THINK*, AFTER ALL. IT'S BECAUSE WE'RE SO MUCH ALIKE, CINDY.
ONLY I'M *BETTER* AT IT.
THAT SOUNDS FAMILIAR, BUT I CAN'T--

OOOOH. MY HEAD. MY HEAD FEELS **WRONG.**
SOMEONE **DRUGGED** ME.
OH, CRAP.
THERE WAS SOMETHING IN THOSE **BOTTLES.** HAD TO BE. BUT THAT MEANS--
WELL, AT LEAST THEY **DRESSED** ME BEFORE TYING ME UP.
WHO--?!
I THOUGHT IT WAS **BETTER** THIS WAY, CINDY.

I'D HAD JUST ABOUT ENOUGH OF YOU **NAKED.** AND I **DO** MEAN **HAD.**
SORRY TO DISAPPOINT YOU IF YOU WERE **FALLING** FOR POOR OLD IVAN DURAK, BUT I'M AFRAID HE'S BEEN DEAD FOR A **LONG** TIME.
BUT IF YOU ASK **REALLY** NICELY, MAYBE I'LL CLICK THE HEELS OF MY SILVER SLIPPERS AND TURN INTO IVAN AGAIN FOR A WHILE, FOR ONE LAST GOODBYE **KISS.**
I WALKED INTO A TRAP ON PURPOSE, WITHOUT REALIZING I'D BEEN DRAGGING **ANOTHER** TRAP **WITH** ME ALL ALONG!
To Be Concluded!